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ABSTRACT

In the spring of 1985, the Oregon Department of Education conducted an assessment of eighth graders' skills in writing, reading, and mathematics. The state reading test consisted of two parts: the first designed to measure students' inferential and evaluative reading comprehension and selected study skills, the second designed to measure students' literal comprehension. After the tests were scored, an interpretive panel of teachers and curriculum specialists convened to draw conclusions about strengths and weaknesses in student performance and to identify statewide needs for program improvement. Among their recommendations and findings are the following: (1) student performance on evaluative comprehension and study skills was at an acceptable level; (2) Oregon's eighth graders are reading at a level appropriate for the reading level of state adopted textbooks; (3) student performance on inferential comprehension, evaluative comprehension, and study skills places Oregon eighth graders at approximately the 62nd percentile nationally; and (4) 80% of the students could easily read and comprehend the Oregon Driver's Manual. (Test results are included as well as sample passages of the test.) (HOD)

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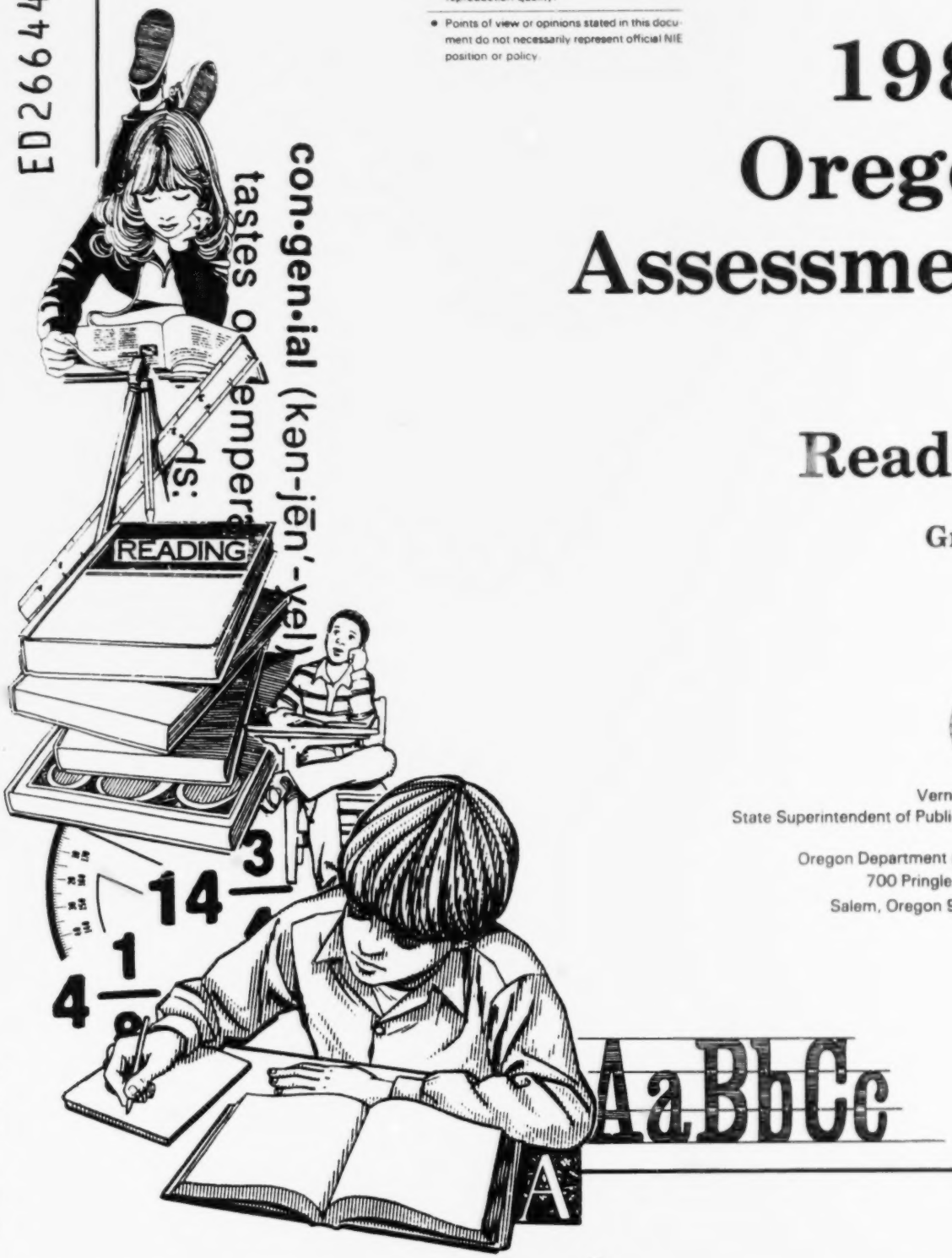
1985 Oregon Assessment

Reading

Grade 8



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CS008347

OREGON STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT

1985

READING

OREGON DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

OCTOBER 1985

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The conduct of Oregon's Statewide Assessment could not have been accomplished without the cooperation and dedication of many individuals. Foremost, were the students, teachers and administrators who were involved in the administration of the tests. Several committees also played important roles in the assessment, including a content panel to help us determine the content and items to be used on the test, a testing advisory committee to help determine the procedures, and an interpretive panel to help analyze and interpret the results. The members of these committees are listed at the end of the report. In addition, within the Department of Education the following individuals were extremely valuable in conducting the assessment in a professional and thorough manner: Thelda Bevens, Language Arts Specialist, Don Fineran, Mathematics Specialist, Ninette Florence, Reading Specialist, Steve Slater, Evaluation Specialist, Gale Roid, Assessment Specialist, and Susi Ayers, Assessment Secretary.

There were also a number of agencies and contractors who provided assistance to the project. In particular, National Computer Systems provided the support for printing and distributing materials, as well as scoring and reporting the results. Washington County Education Service District conducted the scoring of the papers included in the writing assessment, Vicki Spandel supervised the scoring of the writing papers and she and Don Blanchard, from the scoring team, conducted workshops throughout the state on the scoring method, Susan Smoyer helped prepare the final reports, and Michael Hiscox and Evelyn Brzezinski, from Interwest Applied Research, provided support for the construction of the tests.

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OREGON STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT 1985
READING

Introduction

In the spring of 1985, the Oregon Department of Education conducted an assessment of eighth graders' skills in writing, reading and mathematics. This assessment was designed to serve the following purposes:

- Provide information to parents, students, and teachers regarding strengths and weaknesses in writing, reading and mathematics.
- Give direction to the improvement of curriculum and instruction in participating schools and the state as a whole.
- Provide an overall indication of how well Oregon students are achieving in reading and mathematics, relative to national norms.
- Determine the feasibility of using locally-selected standardized tests to obtain statewide achievement data.

This report provides the results for the reading portion of the assessment. Similar reports are available for writing and mathematics.

Test Development

In order to meet the first three purposes, state tests were developed which provided a model for testing that matched state selected skills and knowledge. This was in anticipation of a state testing program designed around a set of common skills and knowledge identified for the state.

The test content specifications were determined by a panel of Oregon teachers and curriculum specialists and the Department of Education reading specialist. Potential test items were then selected from item banks of field tested items and from other assessment instruments. The content panel reviewed this pool of possible test items and recommended those to be used in the 1985 state reading test.

The Department of Education then field tested the test items recommended by the content panel with a sample of 150 eighth grade students from Boulder, Colorado in order to determine whether any items were poorly written or defective in other ways. Minor revisions were made, resulting in the final versions of the test. Members of the Content Panel are listed in Appendix D.

Test Design

The state reading test consisted of two parts. Part I was designed to measure students' inferential and evaluative reading comprehension and selected study skills. These three skill areas were defined as follows:

Inferential Comprehension--the reader draws conclusions or infers meanings that go beyond what is explicitly stated in a written selection (6 items).

Evaluative Comprehension--the reader makes judgments about the content of a written selection, such as whether a statement is fact or opinion, author's intent, and the accuracy of conclusions (5 items).

Study Skills--the reader is able to identify appropriate sources of information about a topic and is able to read and interpret information from various resources (6 items).

The 17 items making up Part I of the test were objectively-scored multiple choice questions. Students responded to questions in relation to short reading passages or other textual material by selecting the best answer from a set of four options.

Part II was designed to measure students' literal comprehension. This portion of the test (56 items) was based on the Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) Test developed by the College Entrance Examination Board. The DRP measures students' ability to understand the literal meaning of reading material at three different levels of comprehension: the independent, instructional and frustration levels. These levels, commonly used in reading instruction, are discussed in more detail later in this report.

Test Administration

The test was administered during the weeks of April 15-26. The reading test consisted of two parts. Schools were given the option of administering the entire test in one day or administering the two parts on separate days.

The test was untimed in the strict sense. All students were allowed to finish within a reasonable amount of time. Estimates of the time needed by most students to complete each part of the test were provided in the test administration guidelines. The estimates were based on the findings of pilot testing conducted by the Department of Education.

A total of 5,444 students in 53 schools composed the state sample in reading. These students made up a representative sample of eighth graders, chosen through a stratified random sample of schools.

Scoring and Reporting

The tests were scored by National Computer Systems. Assessment reports were returned to participating schools and districts in late May and early June, giving results at the student, classroom and building levels. District-level reports were provided if all eighth grade schools were involved. Guides were provided to help local educators understand and interpret the reports. The Statewide Summary Report and a sample School Summary Report are provided in Appendix A.

Interpretive Panel

In June, the Department of Education convened an interpretive panel of teachers and curriculum specialists to draw conclusions about strengths and weaknesses in student performance and identify statewide needs for program improvement. Members of the Interpretive Panel are listed in Appendix D. The remainder of this report documents the panel's findings and recommendations.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE PANEL'S FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Student performance on inferential comprehension, evaluative comprehension, and study skills places Oregon eighth graders at approximately the 62nd percentile nationally.

- Student performance on evaluative comprehension and study skills was at an acceptable level.

- Student performance on inferential comprehension was somewhat lower than desired. More emphasis on instruction and testing is needed in this area.

- The general level of literal comprehension among Oregon eighth graders is greater than 62 percent of students nationally.

- Oregon's eighth graders are reading at a level appropriate for the reading level of state adopted textbooks.

- Eighty percent of students could easily read and comprehend the Oregon Driver's Manual. Ten percent would have some difficulty with the Driver's Manual and another 10 percent would have great difficulty.

- The Degrees of Reading Power test used to measure student performance on literal comprehension skills should continue to be used in future assessments, perhaps employing fewer items.

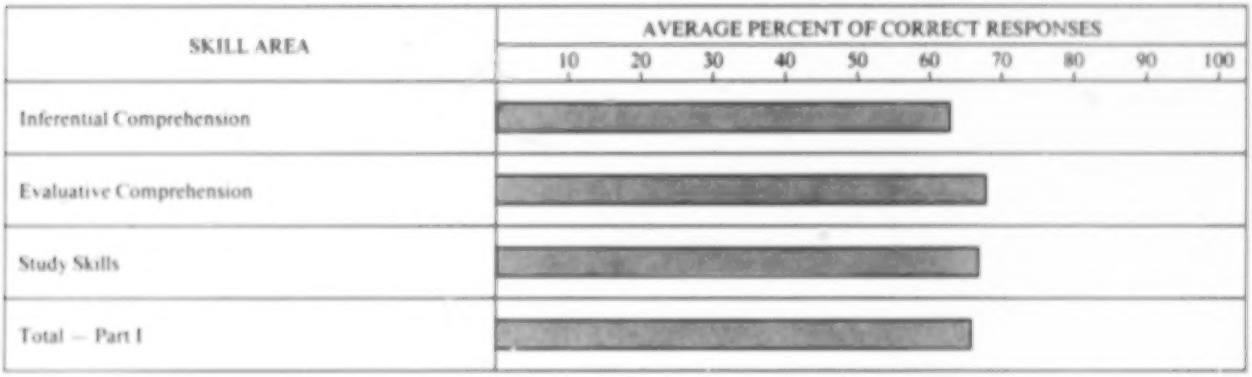
- The number of items measuring inferential comprehension, evaluative comprehension, and study skills should be increased in future assessments.

RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION

Part I: Inferential/Evaluative Comprehension and Study Skills

Figure 1 below displays the results of Part I of the test for each skill area. In general, the panel was satisfied with student performance on this part of the test. The average score of 65.9 percent (11.2 items out of 17) places Oregon eighth graders above approximately 62 percent of students nationally.[1] The level of performance was higher on evaluative comprehension (68.0 percent) and study skills (66.7 percent) than on inferential comprehension (63.3 percent).

Figure 1. Reading: Part I — Student Performance on Inferential/Evaluative Comprehension and Study Skills



The sections that follow should serve to help explain and interpret the results for each skill area. Figure 2 above displays the percentage of correct responses for each item on Part I of the test. In this figure, items are grouped by skill area.

---

[1]Part I average score equated to the 62nd percentile on the SRA Achievement Series, Level G, Form 1, Total Reading Score in a sample of 278 students from two middle schools in Newberg, Oregon, who had been administered both tests.

Figure 2. Student Performance on Individual Items on Part I of the State Reading Test

SKILL AREA	ITEM NO.	PERCENT CORRECT	PERCENT MULTS/OMITS
Inferential Comprehension	3	63.2	0.1
	5	75.1	0.0
	6	73.4	0.1
	7	50.0	0.0
	8	53.3	0.1
	10	61.6	0.2
Evaluative Comprehension	1	68.7	0.0
	2	79.8	0.0
	4	43.7	0.1
	9	79.9	0.1
	17	71.4	1.1
Study Skills	11	77.3	0.2
	12	77.3	0.2
	13	62.6	0.3
	14	39.3	0.4
	15	75.3	0.7
	16	64.9	0.9
Total — Part I		65.9	

Inferential Comprehension

Student performance in this skill area was somewhat lower than desired. Panel members expressed concern about three items which received relatively low scores. On one item, students were asked to read a bicycle warranty detailing thirty-day, one-year, and ten-year coverage and then read a brief passage describing the circumstances under which the bicycle was damaged. From four options, students were to select the one that best described how the warranty applied to the bicycle damage. Because of the relative difficulty of this item, panel members were not surprised by the low percent correct (50.0 percent). However, they considered the skills required to interpret this type of reading material to be important in everyday life and recommended that students receive more experience with such material in the classroom.

On the other two lower scoring items in this skill area, students were asked to read the poem "The Road Not Taken" by Robert Frost and then answer the following questions:

THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

by Robert Frost

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I —
I took the one less traveled by,
And that has made all the difference.

Item No.		Percent Correct
8	Which word describes how the author felt at the end of the poem? (A) satisfied (B) sorry (C) fearful (D) puzzled	53.3%

The panel felt that students may have keyed on the word "sorry" (the most frequently chosen incorrect answer) because it appears in the second line of the poem.

Item No.		Percent Correct
10	In line 10 where the author said, "Had worn them really about the same," what does the word "them" refer to? (A) travelers (B) roads (C) leaves (D) steps	61.6%

Although student performance on both items was lower than desired by panel members, they questioned the amount of instruction students typically receive in poetry in reading classes, particularly in the area of poetry interpretation. More experience with poetry may improve student performance in this area.

Overall, items in the inferential comprehension portion of the test were judged to be more difficult than those comprising evaluative comprehension and study skills.

The panel recommended that more emphasis is needed on the instruction and testing of inferential comprehension skills.

Evaluative Comprehension

Overall, the panel was satisfied with student performance on evaluative comprehension skills. However, a percent correct of 43.7 percent on one item in this skill area caused some concern. On this item, students were asked to read a three paragraph story about Mark Twain and select (from four statements) a conclusion that was not supported in the story.

Panel members thought that difficulty with this item may have been due to the well-known problem of negatively-stated questions and recommended that use of the word "not" be avoided in future items.

Study Skills

In general, scores on the study skills items on the test were acceptable to the panel. Use of a negatively-stated question may have again presented problems for students on item #13 below. On this item, students were asked to read an excerpt from the dictionary (which listed seven words and their definitions) and then answer the following question:

con·geal (ken-jēl) *v.* **1.** To solidify or cause to solidify, as by freezing. **2.** To coagulate; jell. [< L. congelāre, to freeze solid.]

con·gen·ial (ken-jēn'-yel) *adj.* **1.** Having the same tastes or temperament; sympathetic. **2.** Suited to one's needs; agreeable. (con + genial.] — con·ge'ni·al'i·ty (-jē nē·al'e-tē) *n.* — con·gen'ial·ly *adv.*

con·gen·i·tal (ken-jēn'e-tel) *adj.* **1.** Existing at birth but not hereditary.

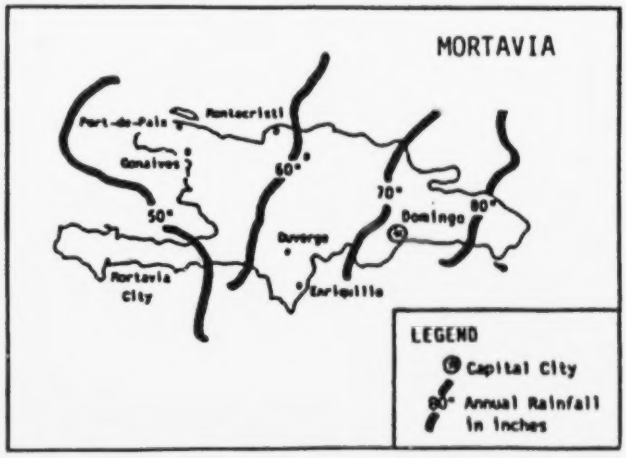
con·ger (kŏn'ger) *n.* Also conger eel. A large, scaleless marine eel. [< Gk. gongros.]

con·ge·ries (ken-jir'ēz) *n.* (takes sing. v.) A collection of things heaped together; an aggregate. [< L. congeriēs, heap, pile.]

con·gest (ken-jĕst') *v.* **1.** To overfill. **2.** To accumulate excessive blood in (a vessel or organ). [L. congerere (pp congestus), to bring together, heap up.] — con·ges'tion *n.* — con·ges'tive *adj.*

Item No.		Percent Correct
13	Which one of these statements is NOT TRUE? (A) A junkyard might have a congeries of old cars. (B) Friends are often congenial. (C) When blood congests it does not flow freely. (D) Elderly people develop congenital characteristics.	62.6%

The item below received the lowest percent correct of all items on Part I of the test:



Item No.		Percent Correct
14	Which of these is the BEST estimate of the yearly rainfall in the capital of Mortavia? (A) 47 inches (B) 66 inches (C) 73 inches (D) 80 inches	39.3%

The panel thought that difficulty with this item may have been due to (1) problems with interpreting the legend because it was unclear and (2) the number of steps required to arrive at the answer. Panel members concluded that map reading items are less desirable than other study skills items. Items dealing with main idea, note-taking, or organizing for studying should be considered as replacement items.

The score on item #16 below was also somewhat lower than desired:

Item No.		Percent Correct
16	The BEST source of information you should use to understand the veto system of the Security Council of the United Nations would be: (A) an almanac. (B) a dictionary. (C) an encyclopedia. (D) an atlas.	64.9%

However, the most frequently chosen incorrect answer (an almanac) was thought by some panel members to be a reasonable choice, especially since students are so often cautioned against using the encyclopedia when writing reports.

Part II: Literal Comprehension/Degrees of Reading Power (DRP)

The DRP portion of the state reading test consisted of 8 passages on a variety of non-fiction topics. Each passage, written specifically for the DRP tests, contained about 325 words. In the student's test booklet, the passages were arranged in order of difficulty, beginning with easy material and progressing to difficult material. Seven of the sentences in each passage contained a blank space, indicating that a word was missing. Careful research on the proper choice of deleted words was used to select meaningful blank spaces in each passage. For each blank, five single-word response options were provided. Students were to select the response that most appropriately fit the blank. Appendix B provides a sample page from Part II of the test.

Reading materials used in primary through graduate school range in difficulty between 30 and 85 DRP units. DRP tests identify the most difficult material that students can comprehend at three different levels: the Independent, Instructional and Frustration levels.

> Independent Level: The Independent Level identifies the difficulty of materials which students can read and understand without help. Students should be able to read materials of this difficulty, and easier materials, on their own.
>
> Instructional Level: The Instructional Level identifies the difficulty of materials which students can read and understand with help. Help could include teacher assistance, classroom discussions, dictionaries, and other instructional aids. Materials of about this difficulty could be used for classroom instruction.
>
> Frustration Level: The Frustration Level identifies the difficulty of materials which students would find hard and frustrating to read. Such materials may be too difficult to use for effective instruction.

To help interpret the meaning of DRP units, the difficulty values of four sample passages are listed by DRP unit in Appendix C.

The panel was generally satisfied with student performance on literal comprehension skills. The DRP scores for the average Oregon eighth grader are displayed in Figure 3.

At the instructional level, the average DRP Score of 66 places Oregon eighth graders at the 62nd percentile nationally. The results indicate that students are reading at a level appropriate for the reading level of the state adopted textbooks for eighth grade. Adopted textbooks range from 55 to 63 DRP values compared to the average student independent reading level of 55 and instructional level of 66. Another interesting finding is that at this level of reading comprehension, 80 percent of eighth grade students could easily read and comprehend the Oregon Driver's Manual.[2] Ten percent of students would have some difficulty with the Driver's Manual and another 10 percent would have great difficulty. This is an example of an important "real life" reading task among fourteen-fifteen year olds.

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[2]The Driver's Manual has a DRP readability of 58-62 whereas the average Oregon eighth grader is at a DRP level of 66 and 20 percent are below a level of 56.

Figure 3. Reading: Part 2 — Student Performance on Literal Comprehension*

LEVELS OF COMPREHENSION	AVERAGE DRP SCORE	NATIONAL PERCENTILE
Independent	55	
Instructional	66	62
Frustration	77	

*Based on the Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) Test developed by the College Entrance Examination Board.

In considering whether or not the DRP portion of the test should be included in future statewide assessments, panel members agreed that it provides useful information and they recommended its continued use. The major advantage gained from using the DRP items is that students' ability to comprehend prose at the literal level can be matched to the measured difficulty of a reading selection, using the same scale of DRP units. Since the College Board has calculated the difficulty of hundreds of textbooks used in elementary and secondary education, the DRP test enables teachers to determine whether instructional materials optimally match student reading abilities.

The panel members did caution that educators may be more familiar with grade level readability indexes than the DRP matrix. However, given that the DRP scale has some better scaling and measurement properties (e.g., equal intervals) than grade-based indexes, the panel felt that the time invested in building familiarity with the DRP would be worthwhile. For example, if a student's DRP score falls below the average DRP values of most state adopted textbooks, supplementary instruction or lower level materials may be called for. Conversely, if students are more able readers than the textual material demands, they may not be sufficiently challenged.

The panel cautioned against using the DRP test for purposes other than a measure of the student's reading level. It does not provide diagnostic information about where errors are being made, nor does it take into account students' abilities to use higher level thinking skills.

The length of the DRP portion of the test (56 items) was of some concern to panel members because it limited the number of items in each of the other skill areas. In future assessments, the panel recommended reducing the number of DRP items (if possible) and increasing the number of items measuring inferential/evaluative comprehension and study skills.

APPENDIX A

STATEWIDE SUMMARY REPORT

SAMPLE SCHOOL SUMMARY REPORT

OREGON STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT 1985

READING
GRADE 8

NUMBER OF STUDENTS TESTED: 5,444

STATE SUMMARY REPORT

PART I: INFERENTIAL/EVALUATIVE COMPREHENSION AND STUDY SKILLS

‡ = School Average ▲ = State Average

SKILL AREA	AVERAGE PERCENT CORRECT (0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100)	Number of Items in Skill Area	Number of Items Answered Correctly: State Average
INFERENTIAL COMPREHENSION	63.3 ‡ 63.3	6	3.8
EVALUATIVE COMPREHENSION	68.0 ‡ 68.0	5	3.4
STUDY SKILLS	66.7 ‡ 66.7	6	4.0
TOTAL - PART I	65.9 ‡ 65.9	17	11.2

54 Students are deleted from these results due to 'non-attempt' or 'adapted' status

PART II: LITERAL COMPREHENSION/DEGREES OF READING POWER (DRP)™ TEST

	Average DRP Score	National Percentile	30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
INDEPENDENT LEVEL	55		55 ‡ 55
INSTRUCTIONAL LEVEL	66	62	66 ‡ 66
FRUSTRATION LEVEL	77		77 ‡ 77

54 Students are deleted from these results due to 'non-attempt' or 'adapted' status

Content Areas	Percentage of Students in Each Quarter of the State Student Distribution: Below Q_1	Between Q_1 and Q_2	Between Q_2 and Q_3	Above Q_3	State Percentile
PART I: Inferential/Evaluative Comprehension and Study Skills					
PART II: Literal Comprehension					

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OREGON STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT 1985

READING
GRADE 8

NUMBER OF STUDENTS TESTED: 154 DISTRICT:

SCHOOL:

SCHOOL SUMMARY REPORT

PART I: INFERENTIAL/EVALUATIVE COMPREHENSION AND STUDY SKILLS

‡ = School Average A = State Average

SKILL AREA	AVERAGE PERCENT CORRECT (0 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100)	Number of Items in Skill Area	Number of Items Answered Correctly: School Average	Number of Items Answered Correctly: State Average
INFERENTIAL COMPREHENSION		6	4.1	3.8
EVALUATIVE COMPREHENSION		5	3.3	3.4
STUDY SKILLS		6	4.1	4.0
TOTAL - PART I		17	11.5	11.2

0 Students are deleted from these results due to 'non-attempt' or 'adapted' status

PART II: LITERAL COMPREHENSION/DEGREES OF READING POWER (DRP)™ TEST

	Average DRP Score	National Percentile	30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100
INDEPENDENT LEVEL	58		
INSTRUCTIONAL LEVEL	69	68	
FRUSTRATION LEVEL	80		

0 Students are deleted from these results due to 'non-attempt' or 'adapted' status

Content Areas	Percentage of Students in Each Quarter of the State Student Distribution: Below Q_1	Between Q_1 and Q_2	Between Q_2 and Q_3	Above Q_3	Median State Percentile
PART I: Inferential/Evaluative Comprehension and Study Skills	18.2	26.6	21.4	33.8	54.5
PART II: Literal Comprehension	24.7	18.8	27.3	29.2	53.8

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SUMMARY REPC T FOR READING

ABOUT THE OREGON STATEWIDE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

The primary purpose of the 1985 Oregon Statewide Assessment is to inform educators and policymakers about the status of eighth graders' achievement in the basic skills of reading, writing, and mathematics. The tests also provide information about student achievement to parents and are intended to assist teachers and administrators in planning curriculum and instruction. The tests were developed by content panels of Oregon teachers, curriculum specialists, and Department of Education subject area specialists. Unless your school made special arrangements, each student was tested in only one subject area (reading, writing, or mathematics).

HOW TO INTERPRET THE SCHOOL SUMMARY REPORT

Description of Skills Tested. The School Summary Report for Reading is presented in two parts, each covering a different area of reading skill and reflecting two distinct testing methods.

Part I of the state reading test measures students' inferential and evaluative reading comprehension and selected study skills. Brief definitions of these three skill areas and the number of items in each area follow:

Inferential Comprehension — the reader draws conclusions or infers meanings that go beyond what is explicitly stated in a written selection (6 items).

Evaluative Comprehension — the reader makes judgments about the content of a written selection, such as whether a statement is fact or opinion, author's intent, and the accuracy of conclusions (5 items).

Study Skills — the reader is able to identify appropriate sources of information about a topic and is able to read and interpret information from various resources (6 items).

The 17 items making up Part I of the test are conventional multiple choice questions. The student is given a short reading passage or other textual material and responds to a question about it by selecting the best answer from a set of four options.

Part II covers literal comprehension, and is based on the Degrees of Reading Power (DRP) portion of the test (56 items). DRP test items measure a student's ability to process and understand prose written at different levels of difficulty or readability. This part of the test identifies the hardest prose that students can read at different levels of comprehension or with various probabilities of success.

The DRP portion of the state reading test consists of 8 passages on a variety of nonfiction topics. Each passage, written specifically for the DRP tests, contains about 325 words. In the student's test booklet, the passages are arranged in order of difficulty, beginning with easy material and progressing to difficult material. Seven of the sentences in each passage contain a blank space, indicating that a word is missing. For each blank, five single-word response options are provided. Students must select the response that most appropriately fits the blank.

Reading materials used in primary through graduate school range in difficulty between 30 and 85 DRP units. DRP tests identify the most difficult material that students can read at three different levels of comprehension: the Independent, Instructional and Frustration levels.

Independent Level: The Independent Level identifies the difficulty of materials which students can read and understand without help. Students should be able to read materials of this difficulty, and easier materials, on their own.

Instructional Level: The Instructional Level identifies the difficulty of materials which students can read and understand with help. Help could include teacher assistance, classroom discussions, dictionaries, and other instructional aids. Materials of about this difficulty could be used for classroom instruction.

Frustration Level: The Frustration Level identifies the difficulty of materials which students would find hard and frustrating to read. Such materials may be too difficult to use for effective instruction.

It takes most people some time to get used to a new scale of numbers. To help you interpret the meaning of DRP units, the difficulty values of four sample passages are listed below by DRP unit. The listing may help you judge the difficulty of materials the average 8th grader at your school can understand at the Instructional and Independent levels.

43 DRP Units

A bark canoe proved to be better than a log canoe for several reasons. It hauled heavier loads. It glided more smoothly. A log canoe was hard to repair. But cracked, torn, or worn bark could be mended quickly. A bark canoe weighed less than a log canoe. It was so light a lone man could carry it. A log canoe could be no longer than a tree. But a bark canoe was different. It could be almost any length.

51 DRP Units

Most creatures take great care to protect their eggs. The walking stick does not. It just drops its eggs, scattering them loosely on the ground. Dozens and dozens drop at a time. As the eggs fall onto dry leaves, they sound like raindrops falling. Many of the eggs do not hatch. But enough do so that the walking sticks will not die out. They have existed on earth since before the era of the dinosaurs.

60 DRP Units

The most ancient hand tool yet identified is the stone hand ax. Such instruments are more than 250,000 years old. Hand axes were made either from flint or from a fine-grained rock that would provide a sharp edge. Using a second stone, flakes were hammered off around the edges. The resulting tool had a jagged cutting edge down each side. It had a crude point and a smooth, round butt. During the thousands of years in which this tool was used it underwent relatively slight changes in form.

72 DRP Units

The ancient Romans' concept of justice and their view of individual rights continue to be guiding forces in contemporary western society. Their code, developed by the emperor Justinian, provided, for example, that no person was punishable for his thoughts, that fathers could not be compelled to bear witness against their sons, nor sons against their fathers, and that the burden of proof rested with the accuser, not with the party denying the accusation.

APPENDIX B

SAMPLE DRP PASSAGE

Following the Civil War, agrarian discontent spawned the development of one of the strongest protest movements in the history of the United States. Especially in the Midwest, overexpanded production had resulted in severely depressed prices for farm goods. Farmers had other ___53___ as well. Crop failures plus poor marketing facilities and restrictive credit practices had reduced profits, threatening many with ruin.

53 a) machines b) schools c) leaders d) problems e) representatives

Many farmers turned to the recently organized Grange Society for redress of their grievances. Unable to achieve agrarian reform as individuals, farmers hoped they might succeed as members of a powerful organization. Therefore, many ___54___. By 1874, some half million belonged to the Grange, which operated social and educational programs, organized cooperative stores, and manufactured agricultural equipment. Such ___55___ were important to members. However, the most significant Grange undertaking probably was its campaign for legislation to regulate railroad tariffs, legislation desperately desired by farmers.

54 a) joined b) planted c) traded d) saved e) suffered

55 a) dues b) officials c) rules d) trips e) activities

The railroads vigorously opposed such legislation and, after its passage, refused implementation, pending appeal. When the courts upheld the regulations, the railroads had no alternative but to comply with the law. Therefore, they ___56___. However, their manner of implementing the regulations so annoyed the public that the legislation was ultimately repealed. Nevertheless, the right of government to regulate the prices imposed by railroads had been established. ___57___ could be controlled. The "Granger Laws" thus furnished the legal basis for subsequent state regulation of railroad tariffs.

56 a) obeyed b) charged c) hired d) branched e) benefited

57 a) Workers b) Banks c) Rates d) Supplies e) Conventions

The Grange was just one of the organizations voicing agrarian protest during the final decades of the 19th century. There were other ___58___ as well. The Alliances and Wheels, as they were called, became politically active during the 1880s, eventually merging to create the Populist Party. Its members, mostly farmers, focused their demands on the free coinage of silver. But they also ___59___ more. They sought a graduated income tax, government ownership of railroads, and direct election of senators. In 1892, at the Populist Party's peak, its presidential candidate polled over a million popular votes.

58 a) debts b) groups c) jobs d) fairs e) delays

59 a) shipped b) sold c) paid d) wanted e) destroyed

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APPENDIX C

SAMPLE PASSAGES ILLUSTRATING VARIOUS DEGREES OF READING POWER UNITS

43 DRP Units

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51 DRP Units

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60 DRP Units

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73 DRP Units

The ancient Romans' concept of justice and their view of individual rights continue to be guiding forces in contemporary western society. Their code, developed by the emperor Justinian, provided, for example, that no person was punishable for his thoughts, that fathers could not be compelled to bear witness against their sons, nor sons against their fathers, and that the burden of proof rested with the accuser, not with the party denying the accusation.

APPENDIX D

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